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EFFECTIVENESS OF SPECIAL COUNSELING ON A GROUP BASIS, FALL SEMESTER, 1967.

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WHEN CALIFORNIA LEGISLATION REQUIRED JUNIOR COLLEGES TO PROVIDE "SPECIAL COUNSELING" TO ENTERING FRESHMEN WITH HIGH SCHOOL GRADE AVERAGES OF LESS THAN 2.0, AN EXPERIMENT IN THE FALL OF 1967 AT REEDLEY COLLEGE, CALIFORNIA, WAS DESIGNED TO COMPARE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING AND SPECIAL COUNSELING ON A GROUP BASIS. RANDOMLY SELECTED ENTERING FRESHMEN SUBJECT TO THE "SPECIAL COUNSELING" RULE PARTICIPATED IN A 50-MINUTE GROUP MEETING WITH A COUNSELOR AND FROM 7 TO 11 OTHER STUDENTS. CONTROL GROUP STUDENTS HAD ONE 15-MINUTE INTERVIEW. COMPARISONS AT THE END OF THE SEMESTER SHOWED SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES FAVORING THE CONTROL GROUP IN (1) GRADE AVERAGES, (2) THE NUMBER WHO BECAME SUBJECT TO DISQUALIFICATION, (3) THE NUMBER OF WITHDRAWALS WITH CLEAR STATUS, (4) THE NUMBER RETURNING FOR A SECOND SEMESTER, AND (5) SUBSEQUENT UTILIZATION OF COUNSELING SERVICES. THE INVESTIGATOR RECOMMENDED THAT THE LEGAL REQUIREMENT OF SPECIAL COUNSELING BE MET BY PROVISION OF INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING SERVICES. (HH)

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EFFECTIVENESS OF SPECIAL COUNSELING ON A GROUP BASIS

Fall Semester, 1967

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EFFECTIVENESS OF SPECIAL COUNSELING ON A GROUP BASIS

Statement of the Problem

The California State Department of Education has mandated "special counseling" for high school graduates entering junior colleges with less than a 2.0 grade point average from high school. Similar counseling has also been mandated for entering freshmen who are not high school graduates, and for probationary students who earned below a 2.0 grade point average the previous semester in junior college. Before this, probation was assigned to those earning below a 1.5 grade point average the previous semester. In a preliminary survey at Reedley College it was found that the number of students on probation and requiring special counseling would approximately double under the 2.0 rule. The number of counseling hours available to handle the newly mandated counseling will not be appreciably larger than the number of hours previously available.

More effective and efficient use must be made of the counseling time available. If as effective a job can be done with special counseling on a group basis, then the required special counseling can be provided with the present staff. If not, more counseling hours must be forthcoming to accomplish the required task, or the possibility of other alternatives must be examined.

For the purpose of this study the following definitions are offered:

Full-time students - those students starting the semester with twelve or more semester units.

Grade point average - grade points divided by units, based on a 4.0 scale. For high school, grades ten through twelve, not counting physical education or military science.

Special counseling - the California State Department of Education merely requires "special counseling" without defining it. Reedley College, for the purpose of fulfilling this requirement, will provide one counseling contact early in the semester. It is in this sense that the term is used in this study.

Two classifications of students requiring special counseling are identified, entering freshmen and returning students on probation. This study will confine itself to all entering freshmen with less than a 2.0 grade point average from high school, or who are not high school graduates.

Purpose of the Study

It shall be the purpose of this study to answer the following question: Is special counseling on a group basis as effective as on an individual basis?

Assumptions

It is assumed that the criteria described in the hypothesis paragraph below are good measures, valid and reliable, of counseling effectiveness.

Review of Related Research

Considerable research has been done on the effectiveness of group counseling, but group counseling refers to a group meeting at specified times, usually periodically, over an extended period of time. The "special counseling on a group basis" will involve only one group meeting of fifty minutes. This definition in no way meets the definition of "group counseling", and therefore no comparable research has been reported. Other California junior colleges will be searching for efficient and effective ways of providing special counseling. The results of this study will provide one more bit of evidence for them to accept or reject in searching for the answer to their particular problem.

Hypotheses

Required special counseling of entering full-time freshmen students will be as effective on a group basis as on an individual basis as measured by grade point average at the end of the first semester, by the percentage of subjects going on probation subject to disqualification at the end of the first semester, by the percentage of subjects going on probation not subject to disqualification at the end of the first semester, by the percentage of subjects withdrawing with a clear status before the end of the first semester, by the percentage of subjects who removed themselves to clear status at the end of the first semester, by the percentage of subjects who return for a second semester, and by the percentage of subjects who return to a counselor for subsequent contacts, during the first semester.

Sub-hypotheses are:

1. There will be no difference in grade point average at the end of the first semester of students who receive special counseling on a group basis and those who receive it on an individual basis.

2. There will be no difference in the percentage of subjects going on probation subject to disqualification at the end of the first semester, between students who receive special counseling on a group basis and those who receive it on an individual basis.

3. There will be no difference in the percentage of subjects going on probation not subject to disqualification at the end of the first semester between students who receive special counseling on a group basis and those who receive it on an individual basis.

4. There will be no difference in the percentage of subjects withdrawing with a clear status before the end of the first semester between students who receive special counseling on a group basis and those who receive it on an individual basis.

5. There will be no difference in the percentage of subjects who remove themselves to clear status at the end of the first semester between students who receive special counseling on a group basis and those who receive it on an individual basis.

6. There will be no difference in the percentage of subjects who return for the second semester between students who receive special counseling on a group basis and those who receive it on an individual basis.

7. There will be no difference in the percentage of subjects who return to a counselor for subsequent contacts during the first semester between students who receive special counseling on a group basis and those who receive it on an individual basis.

Procedure

The subjects were all entering Reedley College for the first time in the fall semester, 1967. They were of both sexes and were starting the semester with twelve units or more. The Dean of Admissions provided a list of students who were identified as requiring special counseling, which numbered 156 subjects for this study. From this alphabetized list, every other student was assigned to the experimental group; the remaining were assigned to the control group. This procedure provided randomization. Eleven subjects were assigned to each experimental group, and twelve were assigned to the last group, totaling 78 experimental subjects. This left 78 control subjects. Of the 78 experimental subjects, five were unable to come at the appointed time and were assigned to the control group; three withdrew before the project started, and seven did not show up at the appointed time. These seven were given special counseling on an individual basis, but were not included in the study's data. The final number of experimental students, then is 63. The five who were reassigned to the control group did not affect the outcome of the study, so they were left in the data for accounting purposes. The experimental groups were assigned special counseling on Tuesday or Thursday at 1:00 p.m. This is an open hour at college where no classes are scheduled, hence everyone was available at that time. Both experimental and control groups were notified by letter to come to the office to make appointments for special counseling. Those who failed to respond were summoned through the teachers. Both groups were treated alike in this respect.

The experimental treatment consisted of one fifty-minute meeting of from eight to twelve subjects in a class-room. During the meeting, implications of the "special counseling" classification were explained along with how the members of this group happened to get into their predicament. They were invited to react to and amplify the reasons for their status, and to discuss what they could do to remove themselves from this classification. They were invited to return to any counselor for individual counseling at any time. This one group meeting constituted the treatment, and it should be pointed out that the one fifteen-minute individual interview which was given to all other students requiring special counseling was denied the experimental group.

The control group experienced exactly the same presentation, but it was on an individual basis, with fifteen minutes scheduled for each individual interview. They also were invited to return for additional individual counseling by any counselor at any time. All initial interviews, both experimental and control, were completed before the end of the first six weeks of the semester.

The design of the study is diagrammed as follows:

R	X	O_1
R		O_2

It is described as the "post test only control group design." This design provides control for all the internal validity items. No control or count of incidental counseling provided by faculty was possible; however, it will be assumed that this happened on a random basis, and that it affected one group no more than the other. Concerning interaction and reactive arrangements, it might be pointed out that subjects of both groups were required to come in on their own time, and both were contacted in a similar fashion.

The observations for both groups were the first semester college grade point average, the number of subjects going on probation subject to disqualification, the number of subjects going on probation not subject to disqualification, the number of withdrawals, the number of students who removed themselves from any special classification, the number of subjects who returned for the second semester, and the number of students who returned for subsequent counseling contacts.

Analysis

The actual tabulations and calculations are to be found in the appendix. The calculation of the standard deviation for college grade point average involved the use of individual grade point averages which were based on different numbers of units attempted. Where total units attempted by each group were divided into total grade points earned by each group, a slightly smaller difference was obtained, but this did not affect the results. Whether or not there was a signigicant difference in college grade point average between the two groups was tested by the T-test at the 5% level of confidence. The other criteria were analyzed by testing the significance of the difference between the two proportions at the 5% level of confidence.

Sub-hypothesis one, pertaining to grade point average, was rejected; the difference was significant in favor of the control group.

Sub-hypothesis two, pertaining to probation subject to disqualification, was rejected; the difference was significant in favor of the control group.

Sub-hypothesis three, pertaining to probation not subject to disqualification, failed to be rejected; the difference was not significant.

Sub-hypothesis four, pertaining to withdrawing with clear status, was rejected; the difference was significant in favor of the control group.

Sub-hypothesis five, pertaining to students removed to clear status, failed to be rejected; the difference was not significant.

Sub-hypothesis six, pertaining to subjects returning for the second semester, was rejected; the difference was significant in favor of the control group

Sub-hypothesis seven, pertaining to subsequent counseling contacts, was rejected, the difference was significant in favor of the control group.

It will be noted that five of the seven criteria showed significant differences in favor of the control group. Therefore it is recommended that the experimental treatment be discontinued, and that special counseling as it is presently defined at Reedley College be conducted on an individual basis. It is further recommended that additional consideration be given to devise some other means of providing special counseling than those described in this study. It is suggested that the study be replicated by other counselors at Reedley College to eliminate the possibility of bias caused by the use of only one counselor in the experiment. It is further suggested that the study be replicated when adequate facilities are available for group meetings.

This study is the culmination of a project started at the NDEA Institutional Research Institute at the University of California at Los Angeles in the summer of 1967 directed by Dr. Thomas Merson and staffed by Dr. Benjamin Gold, Dr. Frank Pearce, and Dr. Stephen Sheldon.

APPENDIX A

Grade Point Average

Individual - CONTROL GROUP

	f	u	uf	u^2f
3.8 - 4.0	1	11	11	121
3.6 - 3.79	1	10	10	100
3.4 - 3.59	0	9	0	0
3.2 - 3.39	0	8	0	0
3.0 - 3.19	0	7	0	0
2.8 - 2.99	1	6	6	36
2.6 - 2.79	3	5	15	75
2.4 - 2.59	3	4	12	48
2.2 - 2.39	3	3	9	27
2.0 - 2.19	10	2	20	40
1.8 - 1.99	4	1	4	4
1.6 - 1.79	8	0	0	0
1.4 - 1.59	12	-1	-12	12
1.2 - 1.39	4	-2	- 8	16
1.0 - 1.19	4	-3	-12	36
0.8 - 0.99	2	-4	- 8	32
0.6 - 0.79	5	-5	-25	125
0.4 - 0.59	3	-6	-18	108
0.2 - 0.39	1	-7	- 7	49
0.0 - 0.19	10	-8	-80	640
	75		-83	1469

$$s = .19 \sqrt{\frac{1}{75 - 1} \left[1469 - \frac{1}{75} (-83)^2\right]}$$

$$s = .8189$$

$$\bar{x} = .19 \left(\frac{-83}{75}\right) + 1.695$$

$$\bar{x} = 1.485$$

Withdrew,
no g.p.a. 7

82

Group - EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

	f	u	uf	u^2f
3.8 - 4.0	0	13	0	0
3.6 - 3.79	0	12	0	0
3.4 - 3.59	0	11	0	0
3.2 - 3.39	0	10	0	0
3.0 - 3.19	1	9	9	81
2.8 - 2.99	0	8	0	0
2.6 - 2.79	3	7	21	147
2.4 - 2.59	1	6	6	36
2.2 - 2.39	2	5	10	50
2.0 - 2.19	6	4	24	96
1.8 - 1.99	4	3	12	36
1.6 - 1.79	6	2	12	24
1.4 - 1.59	5	1	5	5
1.2 - 1.39	2	0	0	0
1.0 - 1.19	5	-1	- 5	5
0.8 - 0.99	3	-2	- 6	12
0.6 - 0.79	3	-3	- 9	27
0.4 - 0.59	2	-4	- 8	32
0.2 - 0.39	2	-5	-10	50
0.0 - 0.19	16	-6	-96	576
	61		-35	1177

$$s = .19 \sqrt{\frac{1}{61 - 1} \left[1177 - \frac{1}{61} (-35)^2\right]}$$

$$s = .8351$$

$$\bar{x} = .19 \left(\frac{-35}{61}\right) + 1.295$$

$$\bar{x} = 1.186$$

$$\sigma_{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2} = \frac{(.8189)^2}{75} + \frac{(.8351)^2}{61}$$

$$\sigma_{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2} = .1423$$

$$.1423 \cdot 1.96 = .2789$$

$$\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2 = .299$$

$H_o = \bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2$ is rejected

Withdrew,
no g.p.a. 2

63

APPENDIX B

Going on Probation, Subject to Disqualification

Total N

Control = 82
Experimental = 63

N on Probation

Control = 40
Experimental = 38

$$P' = \frac{78}{145} = .538$$

$$P_1 = \frac{38}{63} = .603$$

$$P_2 = \frac{40}{82} = .488$$

$$P_1 - P_2 = .115$$

$$\sigma P_1 - P_2 = \sqrt{(.538)\ (.462)\ \left(\frac{1}{63} + \frac{1}{82}\right)}$$

$$\sigma P_1 - P_2 = .041$$

$$.041 \cdot 1.96 = .08$$

$H_o = P_1 - P_2$ is rejected

APPENDIX C

Going on Probation, Not Subject to Disqualification

Total N

Control = 82
Experimental = 63

N on Probation

Control = 6
Experimental = 5

$$P' = \frac{11}{145} = .076$$

$$P_1 = \frac{5}{63} = .079$$

$$P_2 = \frac{6}{82} = .073$$

$$P_1 - P_2 = .006$$

$$\sigma P_1 - P_2 = \sqrt{(.076)\ (.924)\ \left(\frac{1}{63} + \frac{1}{82}\right)}$$

$$\sigma P_1 - P_2 = .022$$

$$.022 \cdot 1.96 = .043$$

$H_o = P_1 - P_2$ is not rejected

APPENDIX D

Withdrawing With Clear Status

Total N

Control = 82
Experimental = 63

N Withdrawing

Control = 7
Experimental = 2

$P' = \frac{9}{145} = .062$

$P_1 = \frac{2}{63} = .032$

$P_2 = \frac{7}{82} = .085$

$P_1 - P_2 = -.053$

$$\sigma P_1 - P_2 = \sqrt{(.062)\ (.938)\left(\frac{1}{63} + \frac{1}{82}\right)}$$

$$\sigma P_1 - P_2 = .02$$

$.02 \cdot 1.96 = .039$

$H_o = P_1 - P_2$ is rejected

APPENDIX E

Removed from Special Classification

Total N

Control = 82
Experimental = 63

N Removed

Control = 21
Experimental = 13

$P' = \frac{34}{145} = .234$

$P_1 = \frac{13}{63} = .206$

$P_2 = \frac{21}{82} = .256$

$P_1 - P_2 = -.05$

$$\sigma P_1 - P_2 = \sqrt{(.234)\ (.766)\ \left(\frac{1}{63} + \frac{1}{82}\right)}$$

$$\sigma P_1 - P_2 = .0351$$

$.0351 \cdot 1.96 = .0687$

$H_o = P_1 - P_2$ is not rejected

APPENDIX F

Returning for the Second Semester

Total N

Control = 82
Experimental = 63

N Returning

Control = 69
Experimental = 48

$$P' = \frac{117}{145} = .807$$

$$P_1 = \frac{48}{63} = .762$$

$$P_2 = \frac{69}{82} = .841$$

$$P_1 - P_2 = -.079$$

$$\sigma P_1 - P_2 = \sqrt{(.807)\ (.193)\ \left(\frac{1}{63} + \frac{1}{82}\right)}$$

$$\sigma P_1 - P_2 = .03277$$

$$.03277 \cdot 1.96 = .064$$

$H_o = P_1 - P_2$ is rejected

APPENDIX G

Subsequent Counseling Contacts

Total N

Control = 82
Experimental = 63

Counseling N

Control = 23
Experimental = 10

$$P' = \frac{33}{145} = .227$$

$$P_1 = \frac{10}{63} = .159$$

$$P_2 = \frac{23}{82} = .280$$

$$P_1 - P_2 = .121$$

$$\sigma P_1 - P_2 = \sqrt{(.227)\ (.773)\ \left(\frac{1}{63} + \frac{1}{82}\right)}$$

$$\sigma P_1 - P_2 = .035$$

$$.035 \cdot 1.96 = .0686$$

$H_o = P_1 - P_2$ is rejected

APPENDIX H

Form Used with All Subjects

NAME _____

1. Reason for "Special Counseling" classification.

2. Causes

3. What can student do to remedy this?

4. Grade requirements

Continued on "Special Counseling"	Probation, subject to Disq.	Removed
Units registered _____		Units Reg. _____
Multiply by 1.75		Mult. by 2

5. List courses and units

	Course	Units	Grade	Gr. Points
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
	TOTALS			

6. List your major.

7. Is it within your ability to succeed in this major?

8. Study Schedule

	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	Evening
M										
T										
W										
Th										
F										
Sat.										
Sun.										

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